

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /057 W

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R 161614Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0152

INFO USMISSION USBERLIN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 07992

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: THE FDP AND THE BONN COALITION FOLLOWING RECENT
FDP ELECTION SUCCESSES

BEGIN SUMMARY: A SOURCE CLOSE TO FOREIGN MINISTER
GENSCHER RECENTLY GAVE US HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BONN COALITION OF RECENT FDP
ELECTION SUCCESSES. HE SAID THAT GENSCHER BELIEVED
THAT HIS FIRM STAND ON BERLIN ISSUES HELPED THE FDP AT
THE POLLS AND HE WOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE SIMILAR
POSITIONS IN THE FUTURE. WHILE OUR SOURCE ADMITTED
THAT THE PROSPECT FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS WITHIN THE
COALITION WAS BETTER, IN THE SENSE THAT THE FDP WAS
NO LONGER CONCERNED ABOUT ITS SURVIVAL AS A POLITICAL
PARTY, HE FELT THAT ON BALANCE THE RELATIONS WITHIN THE
COALITION WOULD BECOME MORE DIFFICULT. HE BASED THIS
ON THE BELIEF THAT THE FDP COULD NOT AFFORD TO LOSE THE
GROUND THAT IT GAINED AMONG THE VOTERS IN RECENT LAENDER
ELECTIONS BY GIVING IN TO ITS SENIOR COALITION PARTNER
ON QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE CONCERNING SUCH ISSUES AS
INDUSTRIAL CO-DETERMINATION, CAPITAL ACCUMULATION, ETC.
HE SAID THAT THE LEAK (WHICH THE FDP BELIEVES CAME FROM
THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE) THAT SCHMIDT HAD BEEN FOR A
TOUGH POSITION IN HANDLING THE STOCKHOLM TERRORISTS
AGAINST GENSCHER'S AND MAIHOFFER'S OPPOSITION HAS
FURTHER DAMAGED THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE FOREIGN
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MINISTER AND THE CHANCELLOR. ALL THIS CONSIDERED,

HOWEVER, OUR SOURCE EXPECTS THAT A BONN CDU/FDP
COALITION IS UNLIKELY BEFORE 1980. END SUMMARY

1. GENSCHER, HE SAID, BELIEVED THAT HIS FIRM STAND ON
BERLIN HAD HELPED THE LIBERAL PARTY IN THE RECENT
LAENDER ELECTIONS AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER WILL CONTINUE
TO TAKE SIMILAR POSITIONS IN THE FUTURE.

2. THE FDP, OUR SOURCE SAID, COULD NOT AFFORD TO RISK
LOSING THE GAINS IT HAD MADE AMONG VOTERS IN
SCHLESWIG HOLSTEIN, NORTH RHINE-WESTFALIA AND THE
SAARLAND BY GIVING IN TO THE SPD ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE.
IN THE CASE OF MITBESTIMMUNG IN PARTICULAR, THE FDP
COULD NOT COMPROMISE ON THE BASIC ISSUES. HE STRESSED
THAT NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE COALITION BETWEEN NOW
AND NEXT YEAR'S ELECTIONS WILL BE ARDUOUS AS THE FDP
PLANNED TO HOLD ITS GROUND ON SOME OF THE KEY REFORM
ISSUES.

3. DESPITE THE "OFFICIAL LINE" PUT OUT BY THE FDP AND
THE SPD THAT THE SCHMIDT-GENSCHER RELATIONSHIP IS BETTER
THAN EVER (E.G., SCHMIDT IS QUOTED IN THE LATEST ISSUE
OF SPIEGEL AS CALLING GENSCHER A DECENT MAN AND THAT
HE AND THE FOREIGN MINISTER KNOW THEY CAN DEPEND ON
EACH OTHER), THE LEAK, WHICH THE FDP BELIEVES CAME OUT
OF SCHMIDT'S OFFICE, THAT THE CHANCELLOR HAD SUPPORTED
A TOUGH POSITION IN DEALING WITH THE STOCKHOLM
TERRORISTS AGAINST THE OPPOSITION OF

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 07992

GENSCHER AND FDP INTERIOR MINISTER MAIHOFFER
HAS FURTHER DAMAGED RELATIONS BETWEEN THE CHANCELLOR
AND FOREIGN MINISTER.

4. OUR SOURCE SAID THAT THE FDP AND THE SPD WILL
ATTEMPT TO KEEP THEIR DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE COALITION
FAMILY IN ORDER TO PRESENT AN IMAGE OF SOLIDARITY TO
THE GERMAN VOTERS TO HELP WIN NEXT YEAR'S BUNDESTAG
ELECTIONS. (NOTE: GIVEN THE DIFFICULTY OF KEEPING SUCH
DISPUTES SECRET IN THIS "SMALL TOWN IN GERMANY"
IT IS EXTREMELY UNLIKELY THAT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE
COALITION PARTNERS WOULD REMAIN UNPUBLICIZED.)

5. OUR SOURCE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE PESSIMISM ABOUT
THE PREDICTED UPSWING IN THE GERMAN ECONOMY. HE
WAS NOT SURE THAT AN UPSWING WOULD COME BEFORE NEXT
YEAR'S ELECTION AND THIS WOULD PRESENT CONSIDERABLE
PROBLEMS FOR THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC IN GENERAL AND FOR
THE SOCIAL-LIBERAL COALITION IN PARTICULAR. HOWEVER,
DESPITE HIS EXPECTATION OF INCREASED TENSIONS IN THE
COALITION AND DIFFICULT NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE
COALITION PARTNERS ON SOME KEY REFORM BILLS, OUR SOURCE
DID NOT BELIEVE A COALITION WITH THE CDU WAS
LIKELY BEFORE 1980. HE SAID THAT HE WAS CONVINCED IN
THIS REGARD THAT THE FDP WOULD REMAIN FIRM IN ITS
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POLICY OF NOT FORMING A COALITION WITH THE CHRISTIAN
DEMOCRATS IN THE SAARLAND.
HILLENBRAND

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